

Tennessee Eviction Process: Notices, Court Steps and Timeline

Summary for landlords and property managers. Last reviewed October 29, 2026. Full guide: <https://www.generationadvisory.com/laws/tennessee-eviction-process>

Tennessee evictions start with a detainer warrant in general sessions court. In the larger counties covered by the Uniform Residential Landlord and Tenant Act, a tenant gets 14 days of written notice to fix a breach or pay rent unless the lease waives that notice.

Key points

- In covered counties, the landlord gives written notice that the lease will end unless the rent or other amount due is paid within 14 days, unless the written lease waives that notice for nonpayment. A waiver must appear in bold type in the lease and does not shorten the five day grace period.
- For a breach that cannot be cured by payment, the notice may end the lease at least 14 days after receipt; a repeat of the same breach within six months allows 7 days, and violent or dangerous conduct allows 3 days.
- In covered counties either side can end a month to month tenancy with written notice at least 30 days before the rent date named in the notice, and a week to week tenancy with 10 days; no reason is required.
- Eviction cases begin with a detainer warrant, usually filed in the general sessions court of the county where the property is located.
- The detainer warrant generally sets a hearing date, and the tenant responds by appearing at that hearing.

Tennessee at a glance

Rule	Tennessee	Law
Notice for unpaid rent	In covered counties, the landlord gives written notice that the lease will end unless the rent or other amount due is paid within 14 days, unless the written lease waives that notice for nonpayment. A waiver must appear in bold type in the lease and does not shorten the five day grace period.	Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-505
Notice for a lease violation	For a breach that cannot be cured by payment, the notice may end the lease at least 14 days after receipt; a repeat of the same breach within six months allows 7 days, and violent or dangerous conduct allows 3 days.	Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-505 and 66-28-517

Rule	Tennessee	Law
Ending a tenancy without cause	In covered counties either side can end a month to month tenancy with written notice at least 30 days before the rent date named in the notice, and a week to week tenancy with 10 days; no reason is required.	Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-512
Where the case is filed	Eviction cases begin with a detainer warrant, usually filed in the general sessions court of the county where the property is located.	Tenn. Code Ann. title 29, chapter 18 (forcible entry and detainer)
Tenant response time	The detainer warrant generally sets a hearing date, and the tenant responds by appearing at that hearing.	Tennessee forcible entry and detainer law
Removal after judgment	After judgment, a short appeal window runs before the landlord can obtain a writ of possession for the sheriff to carry out.	Tennessee forcible entry and detainer law
Typical overall timeline	A nonpayment case often takes about three to six weeks from notice to removal.	Court practice (estimate)

Timeline

Step	Typical time	Rule
Notice period for unpaid rent	14 days	Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-505
Notice period for a lease violation	14 days	Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-505 and 66-28-517
Tenant response after the case is served	Set by the court	Tennessee forcible entry and detainer law
From judgment to removal	Short waiting period	Tennessee forcible entry and detainer law
Whole case, uncontested	A few weeks	Court practice (estimate)

Mistakes to avoid

- Demanding more than the rent actually owed in a notice for unpaid rent, for example by adding late fees or utilities.
- Counting the notice period wrong and filing a day too early.

- Taking partial rent after serving a notice without knowing how it affects the case.
- Keeping no proof of service. Write down who delivered the notice, how and when, and keep a copy.
- Trying to speed things up with a lockout, a utility shutoff or by moving belongings out.

Verify current law

Laws named in this summary:

- Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-505
- Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-505 and 66-28-517
- Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-512
- Tenn. Code Ann. title 29, chapter 18 (forcible entry and detainer)
- Tennessee forcible entry and detainer law
- Tenn. Code Ann. 66-28-504 and 66-28-511

Official sources:

- Tennessee General Assembly: <https://www.capitol.tn.gov/>
- Tennessee Code (official publisher, public access): <https://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/tncode/>
- Tennessee State Courts: <https://www.tncourts.gov/>

General information, not legal advice. Check current law and talk to a Tennessee attorney before you act. Last reviewed October 29, 2026.